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[TITLE PAGE]

# TYPES OF DURA USED BY SHILLUK AND DINKA

by Hasan Mutwakil

*Introduction*

123 In making this note I am quite aware of the fact that I have been in the Upper Nile Province for so short a time that I cannot guarantee its accuracy in every particular. It is the outcome of personal experience and observation and enquiries made among Shilluks and settled northerners (*Gellâba*), and should be accepted as such. If, however, in the course of future investigation any doubt arises with regard to my information, I will do my best to correct or confirm what I now venture to put on record.

*Groups and Varieties*

243 1. *Lwalli* is the Shilluk name for the ' early red dura.'

This dura is early in the sense that it is sown earlier than other crops. But it includes quick-maturing varieties as well as comparatively late-maturing varieties.

The word ' red ' is not a precise description, as the colour of the grain is by no means uniform. The dura exhibits a large mixture of colours from dark red to white, most probably the result of crossing. All these colours can be produced in one field, often from plants in the same hole.

*Lwalli* includes a large number of sub-varieties, of which the following are more common :—

*Toro*, a tall plant, late-maturing, seeds pink
*Othech* ,, ,, ,, ,,
*Nyalwalding*, dwarf, quick-maturing
*Nyakino*, dwarf, quick-maturing, seeds dark red.
*Wer Jal Nyigara*, dwarf, quick-maturing
*Nyanwar*, ,, ,, ,,
*Nyafirwat*, ,, ,, ,,
*Nyanbar*, ,, ,, ,,
*Nyachogo*, ,, ,, ,, White
*Yonongo*, ,, ,, ,, Brownish red
*Chiat alij*, ,, ,, ,,

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It is very difficult to distinguish between the plants or the seeds of these different sub-varieties. Certainly I cannot recognize the differences myself, but I also doubt whether the Shilluk can do so without being misled quite often. All these sub-varieties are generally treated, and behave, in the same way. They are sown early in June, reach maturity in 90-100 days, (exceptions are the heavy sub-varieties), and are harvested in mid-September in a normal year.

2. *Rwai* is the Dinka name for the Shilluk *hwalli*. ʔ ʌ

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The same sub-varieties exist among the Dinka, and the names given above for the sub-varieties are used by them.

It is also grown as an early crop in Dinka land, but in much smaller quantities, as a subsistence crop only.

3. *Jak* is the Dinka name for the heavy, late-maturing dura. It is the Dinka main crop, and has several sub-varieties, of which those commonly known are :—

| | |
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| *Awei* | Seed colour white. |
| *Kuchuka* | „ „ yellowish. |
| *Kwayan* | „ „ orange red. |

Again seed colour is not as pure as the above description may convey. A mixture of colours is always a usual sight in a field of this dura.

All sub-varieties of the *Jak* are considered as heavy or late-maturing. They are usually sown early in July, reach maturity in about six months, and are harvested towards the end of December.

4. *Agono* meaning 'white dura' is the Shilluk name for the Dinka *Jak*.

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The same sub-varieties and their names as above are also used by the Shilluk. As a crop plant, however, the *Agono* is grown but little in the Shilluk district, except among the southern Shilluk between Malakal and Tonga, where it is grown as a main crop.

5. *Angul*, meaning in Shilluk, 'dura of the wind,' is a winter dura. The name refers to no one variety, but actually any crop which is sown so late in the rains that it benefits from the cool north (winter) wind, is known to the Shilluk as *angul*.

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As the wet period from which the *angul* may be expected to benefit is very short, it is natural that only quick-maturing varieties are selected for the purpose.

ʌ [i.e., early red dura, -Analyst]

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2H3 for the purpose. These are generally the lighter *kwalli* sub-varieties (*e.g.*, *nyalwalding* and *nyanbar*).

*Angul* is generally sown in the middle of September, Being a *kwalli* sub-variety it matures in 90-100 days, and is therefore harvested in the second half of December.

*General*

1. I have not heard of the name *kwalli* being applied to maize, but maize may be, and in fact is, very rarely sown as *angul*. The yields obtained from such a crop are usually poor.

2. It may be of interest to note that *jak* or *agono*, is the most flood-resistant dura variety in this area. It tolerated continuous water-logging for more than 40 days in the 1946 rain season.